

# Atlanta's Design Matchmakers

Finding the perfect decorator just got simpler thanks to the Atlanta branch of Designer Previews

Written by Kelly Kunkel | Portrait by Ross Henderson



Barbara Guillaume and Karen Fisher

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**TWO YEARS AGO**, a woman was downsizing from her home on Peachtree Battle to a condo at Park Place on Peachtree, when she realized she needed a designer to gut her new home and give it a clean, fresh new look. Not knowing where to start, it took her a long time to find the perfect designer, but she eventually did and her condo turned out beautifully.

But last winter, the same woman saw an ad in *New York Magazine* for Designer Previews, touted “The Design Matchmaker” by *Forbes* magazine. She dialed the number on the ad, and when someone answered, she asked two questions: “Where were you when I needed you, and why aren’t you in Atlanta?”

That phone call launched the partnership between **KAREN FISHER**, the president of Designer Previews, and the woman, **BARBARA GUILLAUME**, a Realtor and premier art collector in Atlanta. This month the two bring Designer Previews to Atlanta, with Guillaume serving as the perennial matchmaker.

Over the past few months the two women have interviewed numerous designers in Atlanta in hopes of creating an arsenal of the most talented in the city. Guillaume wants the list to top out at 60 designers. “We are so designer rich in Atlanta,” she says. Three designers who’ve already topped their list: **SUZANNE KASLER**, **BOB BROWN** and **CANDLER LLOYD**.

“Everybody has an idea of what they want their environment to feel like, to look like,” she says. “And until they see it, they’re not quite sure how to articulate it.” A consultation with Guillaume allows homeowners to look at examples of each designer’s work, and allows her to learn the scope of the project, budget, and level of taste. From there, she narrows the scope down to three designers she thinks are best suited for the project and sets up individual meetings. The owner will then choose the designer and get to work.

Not only does this process simplify finding a designer, it also opens up local designers to the rest of the country. Just recently a client in St. Louis contacted the New York office looking for a designer to do a huge home renovation. After viewing works from hoards of designers, she still didn’t find “the one.” Then she was shown the work of an Atlanta designer who had caught Fisher’s eye, and the match was made. The Atlanta designer just finished the house in St. Louis and is currently renovating the client’s home in Colorado.

“Everybody deserves fantastic design, and good interiors,” Guillaume says. “Our goal is to bring good design to every budget and promote great designers.”

For more information, call Designer Previews, (404) 846-2183; [designerpreviews-atlanta.com](http://designerpreviews-atlanta.com). Visit [atlantahomesmag.com](http://atlantahomesmag.com) for a sampling of Kasler, Brown and Lloyd’s work.